

"The Byron of our modern poetesses," was the verdict of Henry Nelson Coleridge, the eldest son of the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, writing in an 1840 issue of The Quarterly Review about the poet Caroline Norton. Born Caroline Elizabeth Sarah Sheridan in 1808, she was the granddaughter of the famous Irish playwright Richard Brinsley Sheridan. On their introduction to London Society, Caroline and her two sisters were dubbed The Three Graces for their beauty and accomplishments. Her disastrous marriage to George Norton in 1827 ultimately led to her campaigning successfully to change those Laws of England relating to Divorce, child custody and women's property rights. Caroline and her tragic experiences and life were the inspiration for many works by Victorian writers including Alfred Tennyson, William Makepeace Thackeray, Benjamin Disraeli, Charles Dickens and George Meredith. She died in 1877.

"The Undying One and Other Poems" published in 1830 was her second book. The title poem is an epic based on the legend of the Wandering Jew, the sinner who is doomed to roam the earth until Judgment Day. (Summary by Noel Badrian)

Read by Noel Badrian. Total running time: 5:46:44

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Caroline Sheridan Norton

The Undying One